

## III | NORTHWESTERN STATE



### A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

October 5, 2025

Dear Faculty and Staff,

As Homecoming Week unfolded across campus, it was inspiring to see the pride and engagement of our students, alumni, and community. The past several days have been filled with celebrations of achievement, leadership, and service that reflect the spirit of Northwestern State University.

#### **Coushatta Tribe Partnership**

On Monday, I met with David Sickey, Chairman of the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana. We value our partnership with the tribe and the strong

cultural and educational connections it represents. Our discussion focused on the American Indian Opportunity Program and new ways to strengthen the pipeline of tribal students attending NSU. We look forward to deepening this collaboration in the months ahead.

### **Engineering Technology Career Day**

On Tuesday, the Department of Engineering Technology hosted its annual Career Day, bringing together students, faculty, and industry representatives for professional development and recruitment. The panel featured Phil Rider of Natchitoches Regional Medical Center, Joel Byram of RoyOMartin, and Dr. Shahriar Hossain of NSU. The discussion emphasized communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving for early career success. Following the session, RoyOMartin, CLECO, and NRMCM conducted on-campus interviews. The event underscored our commitment to connecting classroom learning with real-world opportunities.

### **Celebrating Manufacturing Month**

October marks Manufacturing Month, a national celebration of the sector's vital role in our economy. NSU launched the month with Instructor and Lab Coordinator Craig Caskey representing the university at Crest Industries Manufacturing Day. Our Advanced Manufacturing Program continues to expand its impact through collaboration with eight industry partners: ARQ, Alliance Compressors, Boise Cascade, CLECO, Crest Industries, Natchitoches Regional Medical Center, RoyOMartin, and Weyerhaeuser. We look forward to hosting the 8th Annual Engineering Technology Symposium and

Manufacturing Day on Friday, October 17, where students will engage with industry leaders and explore high-demand career pathways.

### **Nth Degree Presentation**

On Wednesday, I presented the Nth Degree to Natchitoches Regional Medical Center CEO Kirk Soileau in recognition of his outstanding leadership and NRMCC's continued support of the university, particularly the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health and NSU Athletics. The Nth Degree is one of the university's most meaningful honors, reserved for individuals who have gone above and beyond in meritorious service to the university and the community. Mr. Soileau's four decades of healthcare leadership, his commitment to patient care, and his role in expanding access across our region exemplify that spirit. Under his leadership, NRMCC has become a model of innovation and service, and we are proud to call him a partner and friend of Northwestern.

### **Demon Brothers Golf Tournament**

On Friday morning, I stopped by Northwestern Hills to welcome participants in the annual Demon Brothers Golf Tournament. Proceeds benefited NSU Football and the NSU Cheerleaders. Special thanks to former football players John Kulakowski and David Groman, along with the rest of the Demon Brothers Booster Club board and members, for their loyal support of our student-athletes.

### **NSU Foundation Board of Directors Meeting**

After leaving the golfers, I attended the annual meeting of the NSU Foundation Board of Directors. I am continually inspired by the board's leadership and commitment to advancing the mission of Northwestern State. Their vision and generosity drive student success, academic innovation, and campus growth. I extend special appreciation to Board President Tommy Wright for his guidance and dedication. The partnership between the university and the NSU Foundation remains a key catalyst for our continued progress.

### **Alumni Association Board of Directors Meeting**

The NSU Alumni Association Board of Directors also held its annual meeting on Friday. This dedicated group models hands-on service and school spirit. Highlights from the weekend included the successful "Return of the Cove" event planned by board member Leigh Ann Westfall; board members Pam Bison, Kim Martin, and Allen Evans leading a strong membership drive at the tailgate; Camille Nunez Blanchard ensuring NSU merchandise and products were readily available at the tailgate and the game; and Virginia Monceret organizing the "Bring the Flame" spirit contest, which our baseball players won.

This culture of engaged volunteerism has flourished under the leadership of Alumni Association President Leah Middlebrook. She has worked tirelessly to strengthen the bonds between Northwestern and its graduates, guiding the association with dedication and vision. As her term as president concludes, we thank her for her service and look

forward to working closely with incoming president Scott Repp as he continues the important work of this vital support organization.

### **Long Purple Line Induction Ceremony**

Friday's Long Purple Line Induction Ceremony honored distinguished alumni whose achievements and service have made a lasting impact on their professions, communities, and alma mater. This year's honorees are Keith Bergeron, Robert and Jacque Crew, Dr. Marcus Jones, Angela Lasyone, Lee Posey, and Pat Weaver.

At the luncheon, the Alumni Association also announced special recognitions. The Volunteer of the Year Award, which honors alumni who give generously of their time and talents, was presented to Ms. Camille Nunez Blanchard and Mr. John Evans. The Outstanding Young Alumni Award, recognizing early-career distinction in service and achievement, went to Ms. Britney Burton Spivey, accepted on her behalf by her husband, Paul Spivey. The Outstanding Alumni Distinguished Service Award, given for a long record of loyalty and commitment to Northwestern, was awarded to Mr. Scott Andrews. The Distinguished Supporter Service Award, which honors non-alumni advocates who make a lasting impact on our community, was presented to Dr. Vicky Gentry.

A special thank you to Office of Alumni and Development staff members Jill Bankston, Cristy Bernard, and Terry Wilson for organizing this memorable event, and to Cole Gentry for preparing the video presentations.

## **Alost Hall Ribbon Cutting**

On Friday afternoon, we hosted the ribbon-cutting for Robert Alost Hall, our new 73,200-square-foot academic building in the heart of campus. The event brought together alumni, legislators, community leaders, faculty, and students to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Robert Alost, NSU's 17th president. Wes Alost offered heartfelt remarks on behalf of the Alost family, reflecting on his father's lifelong devotion to education and to Northwestern. Former presidents Dr. Marcus Jones, our 20th president, and Dr. Chris Maggio, our 19th president, shared their experiences in continuing a project that took years to secure and carry forward.

The building stands as a testament to vision, advocacy, and persistence. I am grateful to our partners AQ Studios, DonahueFavret Contractors, and Perkins & Will, as well as to our Executive Director of University Affairs, Jennifer Kelly, Provost Dr. Greg Handel, and the many university leaders, legislators, and state officials whose efforts brought this project to completion.

## **Dean Leonard O. Nichols Blue Key Honor Society Room**

Continuing Friday's festivities, Martha and I attended the dedication of the Dean Leonard O. Nichols Blue Key Honor Society Room in the Student Union. The event celebrated the remarkable legacy of "Dean Nick," whose motto, "Serving I live," guided decades of service to NSU and its students. The room's naming honors his impact on leadership, scholarship, and service. I was honored to share his profound personal impact on my student experience at Northwestern. Those who wish to

support the renovation fund can do so through the Alumni Association.

### **David and Sherry Morgan Extend Extra Mile Scholarship Awards**

Martha and I then visited the Pi Kappa Phi Fraternity house for a gathering to show appreciation for David and Sherry Morgan and more than a dozen outstanding members of Pi Kappa Phi and Sigma Sigma Sigma who were spring semester recipients of the Extra Mile Scholarship awards. David and Sherry, whose support of many university endeavors is deeply appreciated, awarded bonus scholarship checks to the spring recipients who returned for the fall semester. It was enjoyable and inspiring. We were honored to greet national Pi Kappa Phi President Jake Henderson, who attended a series of Homecoming events Friday afternoon and Saturday.

### **N-Club Hall of Fame Induction**

On Saturday morning, I welcomed a large audience at the N-Club Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, which recognized 13 outstanding members of the Demon athletic family. Inductees included Cody Fillinich (Track and Field), Mike Crow, Derrick Johnese, and Toby Zeigler (Football), Josh Hancock, Tyrone Mitchell, and Jermaine Wallace (Men's Basketball), Amanda Glenn and Coach Gay McNutt (Softball), Amanda Bennett (Women's Basketball), Heather Penico (Soccer), and David Reynolds (Baseball). Layne Miller received the Distinguished Service Award. Congratulations to each of these exceptional individuals for their achievements and for representing the

Demon spirit with distinction, and thanks to everyone inside and outside Athletics who helped stage the event at Magale Recital Hall.

### **Hall of Distinguished Educators**

Also on Saturday morning, I attended the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development's induction of the 2025 class of the Hall of Distinguished Educators: the late Cheryl Corkran, the late Linda Marie Doll Lee, and James Scriber of Homer. The college also recognized two Outstanding Young Professionals in Education, Alyson Erikson of Natchitoches and Dr. Aaron Williams of Dallas. Each honoree has made a lasting difference in the field of education and upholds the proud tradition of teacher excellence that defines Northwestern.

### **Homecoming Parade, Pep Rally, and Tailgating**

This year's Homecoming Parade was held on campus, creating a wonderful atmosphere for students and families. Visiting with students during line-up, including our 2025 Homecoming Court, was a highlight of the day. Congratulations to Queen Peyton Fuller of Deville and King Logan Chadwick of Stanley and to all members of the court. The parade concluded on the tailgate field, where we enjoyed a spirited pep rally and one of the largest tailgating crowds in years.

### **Homecoming Week Highlights**

Homecoming Week was a tremendous success, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Student Experience team, the University



Programming Council, spirit groups, and student organizations. The campus came alive with Broadway-themed events that offered something for everyone, including the popular lip sync competition, fun run, service project, parade, and pep rally.

Homecoming 2025 was made possible through strong partnerships across Student Engagement, the Student Government Association, Intramurals, Residence Life, and Athletics. Our Homecoming Honor Court, students, and alumni celebrated the best of Broadway in spectacular style. It was a true team effort, and the NSU Marketing team showcased campus pride, creativity, and community. Bravo to all involved!

### **Athletics Update**

Martha and our dog Blue enjoyed watching the Demon soccer team's thrilling 2-1 victory Thursday night over visiting Southeastern, which was undefeated in Southland Conference play until coming to our campus.

Friday evening, I had great fun at the Demon Madness event in Prather Coliseum, marking the beginning of preseason practices for our basketball teams. I was pleased with the support shown to our players and impressed by the talent on display. The upcoming seasons promise plenty of excitement and entertainment.

Following the Homecoming Parade on Saturday afternoon, Martha, Blue, and I visited with alumni, students, and friends around Donald's Demon Alley and the Collins Family Pavilion tailgating area. The

atmosphere was outstanding, with an impressive crowd enjoying a beautiful fall afternoon and celebrating their pride in Northwestern. That spirit carried into Turpin Stadium for Saturday night's game, filled with pageantry, alumni recognitions, and a marvelous halftime show by the Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band. Unfortunately, our visitors from Texas A&M-Commerce proved to be the superior football team.

It was a beautiful sight to see that many people on campus, at the parade, at the tailgate party, and in the stands. The parking lots were full. There were cars parked all the way down to Chaplin's Lake. That's Northwestern spirit. I love it.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our students and to the mission of Northwestern State University. This Homecoming Week reminds us how strong our community is when we come together to celebrate our shared purpose and achievements.

Fork 'Em Demons,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James T. Genovese". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James T. "Jimmy" Genovese  
President  
Northwestern State University

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